

lead the world in science and innovation. We need a STEM workforce that is equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of today's industries and make breakthrough discoveries that will launch future industries. We are having a spirited debate in Congress about how best to position ourselves to maintain our leadership position in science and innovation, especially with respect to China. In debating how much we invest, at what agency, and in what form, we cannot lose sight of a key advantage of ours—our diversity.

Research provides compelling evidence that diversity unlocks innovation, yet we have failed to fully leverage the diverse talent available to us. Of particular concern is the underrepresentation of women and minority researchers in STEM faculty positions. According to the National Science Foundation's recently released report entitled, *Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering*, women hold only 25 percent of full professor positions in STEM. The numbers are even more striking for faculty in racial and ethnic minority groups. Black STEM faculty represent only 2.5 percent of full professors across all science disciplines, while only 4.6 percent of full professors are Hispanic. In some fields, the disparity is particularly stark. Women make up only 19 percent of full professors in computer science and 11 percent in engineering. The number of Black and Hispanic professors in computer science are so small, they cannot be reported without compromising their privacy. In engineering, 2.5 percent of professors are Black and 4.3 percent are Hispanic.

This lack of diversity in the academic workforce is holding us back. It is critical to ensure STEM faculty resemble the students they are teaching. When students see someone who looks like them in a career they want to pursue, they are more likely to see it as an achievable goal. Diversity of perspectives also advances research and leads to new lines of inquiry. Without diverse STEM faculty, we cannot grow the STEM workforce and advance the research and innovation we need to take on the pressing challenges ahead and to compete around the world.

The STEM Opportunities Act would empower Federal agencies and universities to identify and lower barriers to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women, minorities, and other groups underrepresented in STEM studies and careers. The bill promotes an evidence-driven approach to these challenges. It requires agencies to collect comprehensive demographic data on the grant review process and on STEM faculty at U.S. universities. The bill supports research on participation and career trajectories and the implementation of best practices for increasing the recruitment and retention of minority students and faculty.

This bill also pushes Federal agencies to do more to ensure all researchers have a fair shot at receiving funding for their work. The Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) is directed to develop consistent federal policies for recipients of federal research awards who have caregiving responsibilities. The bill also requires consistent federal guidance to grant reviewers and program officers on best practices to minimize the effects of implicit bias in the review of federal research grants. It requires OSTP to develop guidance for universities and Federal laboratories to aid

them in identifying any cultural and institutional barriers limiting the recruitment, retention, and achievement of underrepresented groups in academic and government STEM research careers, and in developing and implementing current best practices for reducing such barriers.

I have been working on a version of this legislation for nearly 15 years. I thank Ranking Member LUCAS for joining me last Congress, and again this Congress, in making this a bipartisan bill. I also thank the 25 organizations and institutions that have endorsed this legislation.

After the year we have just gone through, it is undeniable that science, and scientists, are critical to ensuring we are poised to handle the challenges ahead. We must act now to ensure we have the STEM workforce we will need. The STEM Opportunities Act is an important step in that direction. I look forward to working with my colleagues in both bodies to get this legislation over the finish line.

HONORING FIREFIGHTER JEFF KALP

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Firefighter Jeff Kalp for his 16 years of service with the Meyersdale Volunteer Fire Department in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

Firefighters' commitment and service to our community are invaluable. Volunteer firefighters often are called on to respond to emergencies of all types. From battling structure fires to conducting search and rescue operations, volunteer firefighters respond immediately whenever disaster strikes. These heroes often go above and beyond—they teach first aid, educate students about fire and other dangerous hazards, and even install car safety seats for children. Through their diverse and often-difficult work, volunteer firefighters provide lifesaving services and are a staple of our local community.

Firefighter Kalp has worked throughout his career to serve the people of Somerset County. On behalf of Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank him for his work to protect life and property in our community and wish him continued health, safety, and success.

WASTEFUL GOVERNMENT SPENDING

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Mr. YOUNG. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this time today to warn my fellow lawmakers that the passage of any infrastructure legislation must hold contractors and project sponsors who receive federal dollars accountable for their performance or risk another round of failed government projects, financed or bailed out at taxpayers' expense.

Too often, ventures financed by the federal government have failed to be completed or

simply never worked and, in the end, it's the taxpayers who are typically the big losers.

I will be working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make sure that language is included in any infrastructure legislation that ensures that previous projects utilizing major federal assistance, that have defaulted and gone bust, cannot be eligible to reapply and do the same thing again.

The now-famous Solyndra solar energy project—the first major alternative energy infrastructure project launched by the Obama Administration as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act,—cost taxpayers over \$500 million, but the solar panel manufacturer went bankrupt within a few years leaving taxpayers on the hook for almost all of a \$535 million loan guarantee.

Later in the Obama Administration, in what can only be described as Solyndra 2.0, the Department of Energy committed \$737 million to the development of the Crescent Dunes solar energy project in Nevada, also in the form of loan guarantees. That project still doesn't produce electricity and taxpayers are out as much as \$234 million of the outstanding DOE loan balance if not more. This is after the project received an additional \$275 million in taxpayer money under Treasury's Section 1603 program in 2017.

Only in Washington, DC does this scenario make sense. It is crucial that any energy infrastructure projects funded going forward, especially now that Congress is considering a much broader definition of infrastructure, should build in the kind of oversight and accountability measures that will minimize the potential for more boondoggles.

If we fail to do this, taxpayers will once again be left holding the bag and we will have failed to do our duty in terms of overseeing the programs we support while protecting taxpayers.

COMBATING SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN SCIENCE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 17, 2021

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the United States has made great strides in recruiting more women to study science and engineering and pursue research careers. Despite this progress, women researchers remain underrepresented in many STEM fields, particularly in senior positions. For a long time, many assumed that as the number of women earning STEM degrees increased, the disparity at the top would narrow. But that has not been the case. Unfortunately, we continue to lose talented women at every stage of their research careers.

In 2018, the National Academies released a consensus report examining the consequences of sexual harassment on the careers of women in STEM. The report found that sexual harassment is pervasive in the sciences and it is banning women's careers and driving talented researchers out of the field altogether. The report committee found that policies currently in place, such as Title IX, are ineffective at protecting individual researchers. The committee called on Federal

science agencies, universities, and scientific societies to transparently examine the workplace climate, and to go beyond a culture of compliance by taking proactive steps to foster a safe and welcoming research environment.

The Combating Sexual Harassment in Science Act addresses key recommendations in the Academies report. This legislation directs the Office of Science and Technology Policy to issue uniform guidance to all Federal science agencies to implement reporting requirements for all grantees. I commend the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for their leadership in establishing such reporting requirements ahead of any mandate to do so. The bill also supports research to inform updated policies in the future, it seeks to incentivize culture change at universities, provide training for researchers, and it makes clear that sexual harassment should be considered as important as research misconduct, as recommended by the National Academies.

I want to thank Ranking Member LUCAS for his partnership in developing and introducing H.R. 2695. I also want to thank the 24 organizations that endorsed the legislation and the universities that provided input. I recognize that many universities continue to have concerns with some of the details even as they support the overall goals. I believe we arrived at a good compromise that protects the most vulnerable. I also believe some of the concerns are based on a misreading of the legislation. H.R. 2695 does not interfere with due process. It simply requires transparency while protecting privacy.

While sexual harassment in science is not a problem that can be solved with legislation alone, H.R. 2695 helps ensure that the Federal science agencies are doing their part. No researcher should be forced to choose between her passion for science and her right to feel safe. I look forward to working with my colleagues in both bodies to send this legislation to the President's desk.

HONORING FIREFIGHTER MARK FARRIS

HON. JOHN JOYCE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Firefighter Mark Farris for his 11 years of service with the Meyersdale Volunteer Fire Department in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

Firefighters' commitment and service to our community are invaluable. Volunteer firefighters often are called on to respond to emergencies of all types. From battling structure fires to conducting search and rescue operations, volunteer firefighters respond immediately whenever disaster strikes. These heroes often go above and beyond—they teach first aid, educate students about fire and other dangerous hazards, and even install car safety seats for children. Through their diverse and often-difficult work, volunteer firefighters provide lifesaving services and are a staple of our local community.

Firefighter Farris has worked throughout his career to serve the people of Somerset Coun-

ty. On behalf of Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank him for his work to protect life and property in our community and wish him continued health, safety, and success.

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 2981 SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2021

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2981, the "Suicide Prevention Lifeline Improvement Act of 2021," which bolsters aid for local suicide crisis centers.

This bipartisan legislation fully funds overburdened crisis centers, so that they can meet rising call volumes, and takes steps to alleviate call wait times and make support resources available to friends and family of those in crisis.

Specifically, the Suicide Prevention Lifeline Improvement Act:

Significantly increases authorized funding for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline;

Requires HHS to develop and implement a plan to increase quality assurance, eliminate call wait times, implement evidence-based practices like follow-up, ensure resources are available to friends and family of those in crisis, and create guidelines to carry out periodic testing of the Lifeline;

Requires increased coordination and data sharing between the Suicide Prevention Lifeline and the CDC;

Creates a pilot program to research and employ innovative technologies for suicide prevention;

Requires a study and report to Congress from both HHS and GAO on the plan implemented by HHS to reform the Lifeline as well as other recommendations for improvement to the Lifeline's operations.

America and Texas face a suicide crisis, and we must come together to fight this tragic epidemic.

In Texas, crisis centers handle the majority of local calls to the Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

But in recent years, rising rates of suicide and limited funding for call centers have made it nearly impossible to consistently provide quality and timely support for Texans in need.

Making matters worse, the COVID-19 pandemic has added constraints and elevated rates of mental illness.

Each day in Texas there are more than 6 suicide deaths and nearly 30 hospitalizations for attempted suicide.

Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death for Texans and the third leading cause of death among youth ages 15 to 24.

60 percent of Texas suicide deaths occur among people 25 to 64 years of age.

Rates of suicide among Whites increased 12 percent since 2000, particularly among females; rates among Blacks and Hispanics have remained stable during the same time.

Estimated medical costs of Texas hospitalizations for suicide attempts average \$8,849 per patient, or more than \$95.6 million annually.

We need to start talking about suicide, and we need to keep talking.

Suicide prevention starts with recognizing the warning signs of suicide and taking them seriously, and talking openly about suicidal thoughts and feelings can save lives.

Although suicide has long been a serious public health problem, the recent and sudden isolation, unemployment and precipitous change ushered in by COVID-19 threatens to increase the incidence of people for whom suicide seems the only viable solution.

By looking out for one another, matching people with the help they need, and helping those who are hurting feel more connected, people who are contemplating suicide have an opportunity to recover and live lives of meaning and purpose.

For this reason, I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote in support of H.R. 2981.

REMEMBERING THE HONORABLE OTTO BEATTY, JR.

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Mr. RYAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of the Honorable Otto Beatty, Jr., of Columbus, Ohio, who passed away May 14, 2021 at the age of 81.

Mr. Beatty, the husband to our distinguished colleague, Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY, was an attorney and former state lawmaker, a leading figure in the fight for racial equality in Ohio. The couple married in 1992.

As a lawyer, Otto was able to successfully use his Columbus law firm to fight discrimination and fight for a more even playing field for Black and minority-owned businesses.

A true public servant, Mr. Beatty was first elected to the Ohio House in 1979, spending the next 18 years advocating for the disadvantaged, as well as for health care access and tort reform. He also served as special counsel to the Ohio attorney general, counsel to what would become the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus, and chair of the Ohio Commission on Minority Health.

Mr. Beatty was born in Columbus and received bachelor's and master's degrees from Howard University and a law degree from the Ohio State University. His grandmother, Mayme Moore, was a civil-rights activist who stood alongside the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and helped found the Columbus NAACP.

Otto and his family have been trailblazers and strong advocates in many ways—true inspirations to us all. Besides his wife and my friend, Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY, Otto is survived by two children: daughter Laurel Beatty Blunt, a judge on the 10th District Court of Appeals, and son Otto III, a Columbus attorney.

There is no doubt that Mr. Beatty was an absolute giant, a man deep with integrity and great business and political skills. I will remember him for his wonderful sense of humor and how much he adored JOYCE. I was very sad to hear of his passing and my prayers go out to the gentle lady, Mrs. BEATTY, and to all of Otto's family and friends. He has left behind a tremendous legacy in Central Ohio and for the entire state.